

April 27, 2016

## CHARLOTTE COUNTY IS GOING SCREEN-FREE MAY 2 - 8

*Millions Will Participate in Annual Turnoff*



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**Port Charlotte, Fla.** – The Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County and the Community Health Improvement Partnership will join thousands of schools, libraries, and community groups nationwide in a coordinated effort to encourage millions of Americans to turn off televisions, smartphones, tablets, and gaming consoles for seven days and turn on the world around them. Screen-Free Week is a chance for children to read, play, think, create, be more physically active, and to spend more time with friends and family.

“Screen-Free Week is a much needed break from the screen media dominating the lives of so many children” said Jennifer S. Sexton, Community Health Improvement Partnership Coordinator. “Reducing screen time can help reduce rates of childhood obesity, which are on the rise nationwide. It’s imperative that we help children discover the joys of life beyond screens.”

On average, preschool children spend over four and a half hours a day consuming screen media, while older children spend over seven hours a day including multitasking. Excessive screen time is linked to a number of problems for children, including childhood obesity, poor school performance, and problems with attention span.

Activities are planned throughout the week of May 2-8 at various locations in Charlotte County to encourage families to turn off their screens and get out into the community. Activities include a Family Fitness Fair at the Department of Health on Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, a Family Game Night at the Mid-County Regional Library on Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, BINGO at Books-A-Million on Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, and a kids’ fishing tournament at Laishley Pavilion on Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>.

Screen-Free Week (formerly TV-Turnoff) is coordinated by Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood, a national advocacy organization devoted to reducing the impact of commercialism on children. Since the Week’s founding in 1994, it has been celebrated by millions of children and their families worldwide. For more information, visit [www.screenfree.org](http://www.screenfree.org).

### About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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